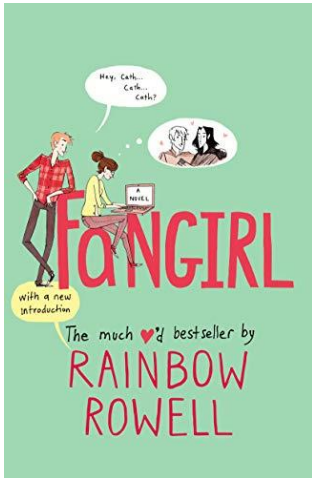


A Book Review of Fangirl by Rainbow Rowell

“To really be a nerd, she'd decided, you had to prefer fictional worlds to the real one.”



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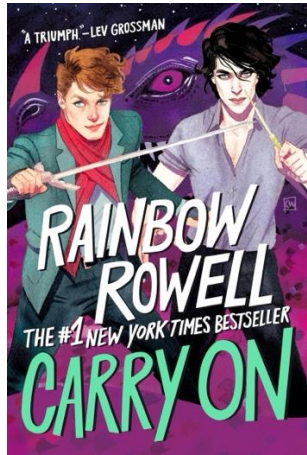
Fangirl is the story of 18-year-old Cath who has just begun her first year of college. Although Cath has social anxiety, she finds comfort in her online community where she writes fanfiction about a popular fantasy series *Simon Snow*. *Fangirl* follows Cath as she navigates college, finding love, creating new friendships, fighting with her twin sister, and worrying about her father. This story is very character driven with little in the way of dramatic plot twists. Some people may find that this isn't for them, but others may find that this makes it easy and comfortable to slip into Cath's world for a little while.

There are many aspects of this book that teens may find appealing. The relationships portrayed in the book are very realistic. The romantic relationship starts out as a friendship and has some natural roadblocks but nothing that feels manufactured. Cath's relationship with her family is multifaceted and complicated. Her twin sister is her best friend, but is struggling with substance abuse issues and with finding her own identity in college. Her father has demons of his own, and her mother abandoned them at a young age. This leads to another appeal factor of this book, namely that the content and characters are very relatable. There are characters struggling with social anxiety, bipolar disorder and substance abuse. There are outgoing, friendly characters and shy awkward ones. Teens are sure to find someone they can relate to. The dialogue is well-written and often witty and fluid, cutting through some of the more serious topics. The book also has good LGBTQ+ and mental health representation.

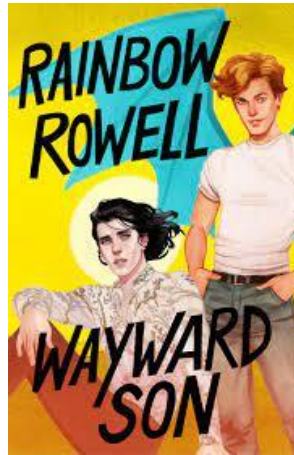
There are some limitations to the book. The book is not very plot driven, nothing too dramatic happens throughout the story, there is no major turning point, and the story ends rather anticlimactically. With the lack of plot, some readers may find that it is a bit longer than necessary. The book has snippets of Cath's fantasy fanfiction peppered throughout it. Some may find this to be a bonus, but others may find that it distracts from the story. These passages are a bit too small to truly dive into the world that Cath is writing about.

This is a great book for teens who want to have lots of related content to consume. Sam Maggs and Gabi Nam adapted and illustrated the story into two graphic novels (pictured above). Rainbow Rowell also took Cath's fanfiction and wrote it into a separate series; *Carry On*

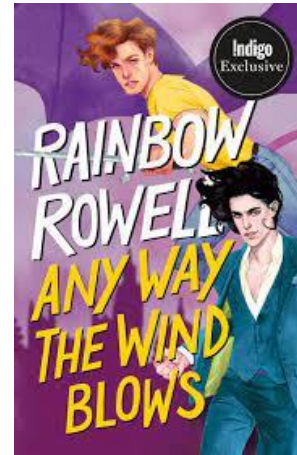
(pictured below). Overall, this is a fun read that would be of interest to many different teens, whether they prefer fantasy or realistic fiction!



[Image Source](#)



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Rowell, R. (2013) *Fangirl*. St. Martin's Griffin Books.